



EPHA Response to WHO Consultation on the Global Plan of Action (GPoA) on Climate Change and Health

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To: World Health Organization

The European Public Health Alliance ([EPHA](#)) commends the World Health Organization (WHO) on its significant progress in developing the Global Plan of Action on Climate Change and Health (GPoA). We particularly appreciate WHO's commitment to enhancing civil society engagement across its actions, as evidenced by the establishment of the Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Commission and the multiple references to civil society participation within the GPoA document.

To further bolster the GPoA, EPHA recommends that WHO advocate for Member States to adopt a similar approach by institutionalising the involvement of health-focused CSOs in climate and health policy processes. This should be a fundamental aspect of the GPoA, ensuring that health CSOs are consistently engaged in shaping, implementing, and evaluating climate-related policies at all levels. We also suggest that CSOs be considered as integral members of any Steering Committees established for the coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of these efforts.

Strengthening Action Area: Empower, Inform, and Effectively Engage the Health Community to Support Climate Action

Under the goal of "Advocating for the integration of health in national and global climate agenda," particularly Objective C to empower, inform and actively engage the health community, EPHA urges WHO to broaden and strengthen the actions recommended to Member States. It is essential to ensure that Member States institutionalise the engagement of health civil society in climate-related policy processes at regional and international levels. Such engagement should be systematic and ongoing, ensuring that health considerations are central to climate action across all policy domains.

Specific Recommendations for the European Union and Beyond:

1. At the EU Level:

- **Establishment of a Dedicated Expert Group on Climate Change and Health:** EPHA recommends that the European Commission create an expert group comprising CSOs, EU Member State representatives, and other stakeholders. This group should be tasked with reviewing progress on climate change mitigation and its health co-benefits. The expert group should also set and monitor targets across countries and sectors, facilitate knowledge sharing, and ensure that policies are evidence-based and inclusive of civil society contributions.

2. At the Global Level:

- **Creation of a Climate & Health Task Force under the Global Gateway Framework:** This Task Force should include representatives from global and European health CSOs, governmental bodies, and regional organisations. Its role would be to monitor the health and climate impacts of Global Gateway initiatives, ensuring alignment with climate and health objectives across all partnerships.

3. Transatlantic Partnership:

- **Active Involvement of Health CSOs in the US-EU High-Level Climate Action Group:** EPHA recommends the inclusion of health-focused CSOs in the ongoing US-EU dialogue on climate action. The 2021 US-EU agreement to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 provides a strategic opportunity to integrate health considerations into transatlantic climate discussions and enhance collaboration across the Atlantic.

In conclusion, EPHA strongly encourages WHO and Member States to ensure that health civil society is an integral part of the climate change and health discourse. By institutionalising CSO engagement, we can foster more inclusive, effective, and sustainable climate policies that protect and promote global public health.

Yours sincerely,

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ABOUT EPHA

EPHA is a change agent, Europe's leading NGO alliance advocating for better health. A member-led organisation made up of public health NGOs, patient groups, health professionals and disease groups, we work to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe. Our actions and campaigns reflect our values: equity, solidarity, sustainability, universality, diversity and good governance.

Since formal establishment in spring 1993, EPHA has built a solid network of over 50 members dedicated to providing better health for all. Our mission is to bring together the public health community to provide thought leadership and facilitate change; to build public health capacity to deliver equitable solutions to European public health challenges, to improve health and reduce health inequalities. Our vision is of a Europe with universal good health and well-being, where all have access to a sustainable and high-quality health system: A Europe whose policies and practices contribute to health, both within and beyond its borders.